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Ruby May Go Free In Seven Years

Life Sentenced
Approved By DA

DALLAS, Tex. (AP) — The district attorney proposed Thursday that Jack Ruby's death sentence for killing President John F. Kennedy's assassin be reduced to a prison term. This could mean freedom in seven years.

Dist. Atty. Henry Wade, who prosecuted the onetime night club operator, said he has twice offered to recommend a sentence of life in prison.

Wade said the defense insists instead on a five-year sentence.

There is no way a convict can be kept behind bars in Texas for life provided he has a good prison record.

A convict can apply for parole in 15 years or after serving a third of his sentence, whichever

is less.

Good conduct, appointment as trusty and donating blood can reduce the 15-year maximum for parole application to as few as seven years.

A jury assessed a sentence of death in the electric chair against Ruby for killing Lee Harvey Oswald two days after Oswald assassinated President Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Execution has been delayed by numerous complex appeals.

Wade said, "One of their attorneys — Mr. Sol Dann of Detroit — wants to hold out for a five-year sentence.

"We do not feel this would be a proper punishment. The punishment should be at least life imprisonment."

Another Ruby lawyer, Phil Burleson of Dallas, indicated the defense is not interested in an agreement with the district attorney because, he says, there are enough errors in the original trial for Ruby to receive another trial.

The district attorney said the responsibility for asking a commutation of the death sentence rests with the defense.

The request would be made to the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles. The board would make a recommendation to Gov. John B. Connally, himself wounded by Oswald.